[9th August 1954

Reduction of the wages of workers by handloom factory owners in Chirakkal taluk.

* 1179 *Q.*—SRI K. P. GOPALAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that the Commissioner of Labour sent an order on 5th January 1954 to all the handloom factory owners of Chirakkal taluk, Malabar, informing them that the reduction of the wages from Rs. 5–14–0 to Rs. 4–4–0 they made is illegal and to show cause why action should not be taken against them under section 29 of the Industrial Disputes (Appellate Tribunal) Act, 1950, or under section 31 of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947; and

(*b*) if so, how many factory owners replied to the order and how many factory owners were prosecuted?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" (*a*) Yes, Sir.

" (*b*) Show cause notices were sent to 124 managements.

(1) Ninety-five have so far replied.

(2) No factory owner has been prosecuted yet."

SRI K. P. GOPALAN :—" Are the Government aware that the factory owners reduced the wages when there was an appeal regarding wages and bonus pending before the Appellate Tribunal and that the action of the management in reducing wages without taking the permission of the Appellate Tribunal is illegal? May I know from the Hon. Minister why the Government have delayed taking action against the management who have openly violated the Appellate Tribunal Act as well as the Industrial Disputes Act and whether the Government will be pleased to see that wages are not reduced by the management? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" I have since received a report from the Commissioner to the effect that all the factories have resumed work and that there is no dispute pending. The Commissioner has, however, stated that it is open to the workers to seek remedy under the Industrial Disputes Act against the action of the management in altering the conditions of employment during the pendency of adjudication proceedings without the concurrence of the Tribunal, but that the workers have not taken any action accordingly so far. It is open to the workers to file complaints for short payment under the Payment of Wages Act and under section 33-A for unauthorized change in the conditions of employment. Without that, Government cannot take any action."

SRI K. MADHAVAN NAMBIAR :—" Are the Government aware that the wages of the workers are being cut down even now and, if so, what action do the Government propose to take to prevent such a cut? "

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THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" As I have stated, if the workers move in the matter, the Government will take necessary action."

SRI P. RAMAMURTHI :— " அட்ஜுடிகேஷன் நடந்து கொண்டிருக்கக்கூடிய காலத்தில் தொழிலாளர்கள் தங்களுடைய நிலைமையை முதலாளிகள் மாற்றினதற்கு தாவா செய்யலாம் என்று கனம் மந்திரி அவர்கள் குறிப்பிட்டிருக்கிறார். அவ்விதம் தாவா செய்வதற்கு சர்க்காருக்கும் அதிகாரம் சட்டம் மூலமாகக் கொடுக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. அப்படிப்பட்ட நிலைமையில் முதலாளிகள் அக்கிரமமாக நடக்கும்படியான காலத்தில் சர்க்காரே நடவடிக்கை எடுக்க முன் வருவார்களா ? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" Even about this question, we have called for a report from the Commissioner of Labour."

SRI N. RATHINA GOUNDER :—" நமது மாகாணத்தில் திருச்சி, கரூர் போன்ற இடங்களில் கைத்தறி நெசவாளர்களுடைய கூலிகளை காரணமில்லாமல் குறைத்திருப்பதால் வேலைக்குத் தகுந்த கூலியைக் கொடுக்க சர்க்கார் ஏற்பாடு செய்வார்களா ? "

MR. SPEAKER :—" வேறு கேள்வி போட்டுக் கேளுங்கள்.

" These questions relate to Chirakkal taluk, but the hon. Member's question is a general question. So he may give notice of a separate question."

SRI T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—" The Hon. Minister said that the Government were considering the question of taking action against the management who have violated the Industrial Disputes Act. Is the Hon. Minister aware that because of the delayed and halting steps that the Government are taking, the managements of factories of Chirakkal have further reduced the wages of workers and will he be pleased to say whether action will be taken quickly so that further reduction may be avoided? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" I have already stated that the workers also should do their part of the work. We have also counter-complaints from the factory owners. They point out that during the pendency of the dispute before the Industrial Tribunal, the workers struck work which was an offence under Section 23 of the Industrial Disputes Act and Section 24 of the Industrial Disputes Amendment Act. We are examining the whole question. If the workers will move further in the matter, Government will take action."

SRI V. R. KRISHNA AYYAR :—" It is gathered from the several answers given by the Hon. Minister that there has been a violation by one hundred odd factories of the provisions of the Industrial Disputes Act. Still the Government have in their executive wisdom taken such an enormous time even for considering the question of taking action. Is it not an abetment of the disrespect of the Industrial Disputes Act by the managements? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" Wisdom does pay. I have already stated that all the factories have resumed work. Regarding the violation of the Act, it is not the Government alone that have to be blamed."